7th August 1929]

Railways

Construction of a new railway line from Mangalore to Malpe.

*86 Q.—Mr. K. R. Karant: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether Government are aware as to which of the railway lines, viz., Mangalore-Moolky-Malpe (South Kanara district) or the alternative route Mangalore-Karkal-Malpe, has been decided to be constructed; and

(b) if so, when the work will commence?

A.—(a) No. The Government understand that a preliminary survey for a line between Mangalore and Malpe has been sanctioned.

(b) The Government have no information.

Mr. K. R. Karant:—"With reference to the answer to clause (b) of this question may I ask whether the Government will be pleased to get some information on the point?" 11-30 a.m.

The hon. Sir Thomas Moir:—"I am afraid that no information will be available until the preliminary survey has been completed."

Mr. J. A. Saldanha:—"May I ask whether the Local Government has to be approached by the Government of India as a condition precedent to the construction of the railway from Moolky to Malpe?"

The hon. Sir Thomas Moir:—"I must ask for notice of the question."

Elections

Introduction of the Bombay system of voting by representation by symbols.

*87 Q.—Mr. K. R. Karant: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to know the working and result of the Bombay system of voting by representation by symbols and, if not, why not; and if they have, what information they have on the matter;

(b) whether it is intended by them to introduce that or any other system by which the secrecy of the ballot may be secured at the coming Council elections; and if not, why not;

(c) whether Government are aware that at election times even literate people are forced by threats of influential people to vote to their dictation; and

(d) if so, what steps Government intend taking to see that the secrecy of the ballot is maintained in the case of the vast masses of our illiterate people?

A.—(a) The Government are not aware of how the cross and symbol system worked in Bombay during the 1926 elections and have not thought it necessary to enquire.

(b) The Government have in the past carefully considered every aspect of this question and the existing regulation 24 (1), formulated after the experience of the last elections, is the result.

(c) The suggestion that even literate people are thus affected surely shows that the remedy does not lie in the use of symbols or other device specially designed for the illiterate.

(d) See the answer to clause (b).